This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

## **Listing of Claims**

- 1. (currently amended) A method for combining independent scene layers to form computer generated environments, comprising the steps of:
  - constructing a terrain layer using stored terrain data;
  - generating a feature layer using feature layer data that is <u>configured to be modified</u> <u>independently and</u> stored separately from the stored terrain data; and
    - combining the feature layer and the terrain layer to form a composite environment.
- 2. (original) A method as in claim 1, further comprising the step of rendering the composite environment for viewing.
- 3. (original) A method as in claim 1, wherein the step of generating a feature layer further comprises the step of generating a plurality of feature layers that are configured to be combined together with other feature and terrain layers.
- 4. (original) A method as in claim 1, further comprising the step of determining the locations of features in the feature layer in reference to the terrain layer.
- 5.-38.(cancelled)
- 39. (new) A method as in claim 2, wherein the step of rendering the composite environment for viewing further comprises the step of resolving conflicts between layers.
- 40. (new) A method as in claim 2, wherein the step of rendering the composite environment for viewing further comprises the step of applying different run-time response rules to the terrain layer and the feature layer.

- 41. (new) A method as in claim 1, further comprising the step of defining different run-time response rules for the terrain layer and the feature layer.
- 42. (new) A method as in claim 41, wherein the step of defining different run-time response rules for the terrain layer and the feature layer further comprises providing a level-of-detail control for the terrain layer and a separate level-of-detail control for the feature layer.
- 43. (new) A method as in claim 41, wherein the step of defining different run-time response rules for the terrain layer and the feature layer further comprises specifying a field-of-view control for the terrain layer and a separate field-of-view control for the feature layer.
- 44. (new) A method as in claim 1, further comprising the steps of
  - a. modifying the feature layer; and
  - b. recompiling the feature layer independently from the terrain layer.
- 45. (new) A method for combining independent scene layers to form computer generated environments, comprising the steps of:
  - c. constructing a terrain layer using stored terrain data;
  - d. generating a feature layer using feature layer data that is stored separately from the stored terrain data;
  - e. combining the feature layer and the terrain layer to form a composite environment; and
  - f. defining a run-time response rule for the terrain layer and a different run-time response rule for the feature layer.
- 46. (new) A method as in claim 45, wherein the step of defining different run-time response rules for the terrain layer and the feature layer further comprises providing a level-of-detail control for the terrain layer and a separate level-of-detail control for the feature layer.

- 47. (new) A method as in claim 45, wherein the step of defining different run-time response rules for the terrain layer and the feature layer further comprises specifying a field-of-view control for the terrain layer and a separate field-of-view control for the feature layer.
- 48. (new) A method for combining independent scene layers to form computer generated environments, comprising the steps of:
  - g. constructing a terrain layer using stored terrain data;
  - h. generating a feature layer using feature layer data that is configured to be modified independently and stored separately from the stored terrain data;
  - i. combining the feature layer and the terrain layer to form a composite environment; and
  - j. defining a run-time response rule for the terrain layer and a different run-time response rule for the feature layer.
- 49. (new) A method as in claim 48, further comprising the step of rendering the composite environment for viewing.
- 50. (new) A method as in claim 49, wherein the step of rendering the composite environment for viewing further comprises the step of applying different run-time response rules to the terrain layer and the feature layer
- 51. (new) A method as in claim 49, wherein the step of rendering the composite environment for viewing further comprises the step of resolving conflicts between layers